

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Office action mailed August 13, 2007. Reexamination and reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-25 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 15, 16, 24, and 25 being the independent claims. Claims 15-23 and 25 have been withdrawn. Applicant thanks the Examiner for finding allowable subject matter in claim 8 and 10. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 11, 13, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,435,941 to White (“White”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 relates to a load cup mechanism that includes, *inter alia*, a load cup arm configured to pivot about an axis between a load position aligned with the processing apparatus and an off-load position and a work piece platform coupled to an end of the load cup arm. Claim 24 relates to a processing apparatus for processing a work piece that includes, *inter alia*, a load cup mechanism configured to pivot from an off-load position to a load position to load a work piece into the processing head for processing.

White discloses a semiconductor wafer processing system and more specifically, a semiconductor wafer planarization system for polishing a workpiece, such as a semiconductor substrate or wafer. See Abstract. The system generally includes a first polishing module that has a polishing head for retaining a workpiece, a staging module, a set of load cups for transferring the workpiece to and from the polishing head, and a primary robot that has a workpiece gripper transfers the workpiece between the first set of load cups and the staging module. See id.

Contrary to the allegations in the Office action, there is simply no teaching of a work piece platform coupled to an end of the load cup arm, as recited in claim 1. Additionally, there is no teaching that the load cup arm (to which the work piece platform is coupled) is configured to pivot about an axis between a load position aligned with the processing

apparatus and an off-load position, also recited in claim 1. Instead, White teaches a primary robot that transfers the workpiece between load cups and a staging module. Additionally, there is no teaching of a load cup mechanism configured to pivot from an off-load position to a load position to load a work piece into the processing head for processing, as recited in claim 24.

Accordingly, as White does not teach each and every element of claims 1 and 24, and hence, the claims that depend therefrom (e.g., claims 3, 4, 5, 11, and 13), the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of these rejections.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6, 7, 9, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over White. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 6, 7, 9, 12, and 14 depend from claim 1 and rely on the arguments above as they relate to White. In particular, no where does White teach or suggest a load cup arm configured to pivot about an axis between a load position aligned with the processing apparatus and an off-load position or a work piece platform coupled to an end of the load cup arm, as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, as White does not teach each and every element of claim 1, and hence, the claims that depend therefrom (e.g., claims 6, 7, 9, 12, and 14), the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of these rejections.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over White in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,227,950 to Hempel et al. ("Hempel"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and rely on the arguments above as they relate to White. In particular, nowhere does White teach or suggest a load cup arm configured to pivot about an axis between a load position aligned with the processing apparatus and an off-load position or a work piece platform coupled to an end of the load cup arm, as recited in claim 1. In addition, Hempel does not make up for these deficiencies. Hempel teaches a dual purpose workpiece handoff station for intermediate staging a semiconductor wafer, but there is simply no mention or suggestion of a load cup arm configured to pivot about an axis between a load position aligned with the processing apparatus and an off-load position or a

work piece platform coupled to an end of the load cup arm.

Accordingly, as neither White, Hempel, nor their combination teach or suggest each and every element of claim 1, and hence, the claims that depend therefrom (e.g., claim 2), the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Based on the above, independent Claims 1 and 24 are patentable over the citations of record. The dependent claims are also deemed patentable for the reasons given above with respect to the independent claims and because each recite features which are patentable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

None of the other art of record is understood to disclose or suggest the inventive concept of the present invention as defined by the claims.

Hence, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

If for some reason Applicant has not paid a sufficient fee for this response, please consider this as authorization to charge Ingrassia, Fisher & Lorenz, Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

Ingrassia Fisher & Lorenz, PC

Date: November 7, 2007

By /CINDY H. KWACALA/
Cindy H. Kwacala
Reg. No. 47,667
(480) 385-5060
Customer No. 29,906